

PMI/Coach of the Week . . .



Cpl. Alisha R. Fitzgerald

Chosin Range Coach Lance Cpl. Jason Kokx helped qualify 19 recruits on the rifle range from Platoon 1088, Bravo Co., 1st RTBn., to become this week’s Coach of the Week. Kokx coached five experts, five sharpshooters and nine marksmen. Primary Marksmanship Instructor Sgt. Gregory M. Barnhart (not pictured) led 93.3 percent of recruits from Platoon 1088, Bravo Co., 1st RTBn., to rifle qualification, earning him the title PMI of the Week. The platoon achieved an average score of 204.5.



Cpl. Thomas Perry

Two World War II-era drill instructors observe the Morning Colors Ceremony at Barrow Hall Oct. 3 during their group’s 13th reunion aboard the Depot.

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Many of the World War II drill instructors never attended Drill Instructor School, because the official school was not opened until 1953. They received on-the-job training, which is a big difference between the 12 weeks of intense training that hopeful drill instructors now receive, but they learned duties quickly, and produce well-rounded Marines almost overnight.

“We can all learn from the job they did and what they saw,” said Coughlin. “It is always motivating to meet Marines that laid the ground work for the Corps.”

As the World War II drill instructors toured the Depot, they witnessed many aspects of recruit training including close order drill and the gas chamber, but the highlight for many of them was visiting the Drill Instructor School, which, even though none of them attended, still holds some of their names and a lot of their memories.

During their visit to the school, they sat and listened to 1st Sgt. Lawrence Fineran, an instructor at the Drill Instructor School, give a brief about the standard operating procedures of the new

Marine drill instructor.

The former Marines and their wives sat and listened to Fineran, soaking in the new drill instructor experience. They sat in the seats that current drill instructor students use each day on their way to becoming the next generation of the Corps’ ultimate example of excellence.

Somewhat, the “Old-Corps” drill instructors did not look out of place in those seats. They are still drill instructors. Of course, they now move slower and their daily uniforms consist of khakis and t-shirts, but their passion for the Marine Corps remains the same.

“If he could, he would re-enlist right now,” said Lorraine Jones, whose husband Bob joined the Corps as a private in 1938 and retired as a colonel in 1958.

“I’m amazed with all the changes,” said Bob. “We didn’t have all the things the Marines have today. I don’t know if I could have passed that Crucible.”

Without Jones and the rest of the World War II era Marines, there may not even be a Crucible.



Cpl. Jennifer Brofer

John C. Stevens III signs a copy of his book, ‘Court-Martial at Parris Island: the Ribbon Creek Incident,’ with fellow author Dr. Eugene Alvarez, author of the book, ‘Images of America: Parris Island,’ during a book signing at the Marine Corps Exchange Oct. 2.

Noted PI authors sign books at MCX

CPL. JENNIFER BROFER
STAFF WRITER

Doctor Eugene Alvarez, author of the book, “Images of America: Parris Island,” and John C. Stevens III, author of the book, “Court-Martial at Parris Island: the Ribbon Creek Incident,” visited the Depot to sign copies of their books at the Marine Corps Exchange Oct. 2.

The two authors met in 1996 through a mutual friend at the Parris Island Museum while Stevens was doing research for his book. They have been friends ever since, so they opted to attend the book signing together to promote both books.

Alvarez’s 128-page book gives a history of Parris Island from the French Charlesfort of 1562 to present day and features black-and-white Marine Corps photos.

While both books are historical in nature, Stevens’ 184-page book focuses on what he calls the “most notorious court martial in the history of the Marine Corps — the incident that nearly ended the Marine Corps.”

Stevens’ book describes the events and aftermath of the

“The best part has been meeting the people I’ve met who’ve contacted me because of my book. I’ve met six former recruits since its publication.”
-Dr. Eugene Alvarez, author of the book, “Images of America: Parris Island”



Ribbon Creek Incident of April 8, 1956, when Drill Instructor Staff Sgt. Matthew McKeon marched Platoon 71 into the creek to “instill discipline” into his recruits. Six recruits drowned as a result.

“It was quite a notorious story back in the 50s,” said Stevens who attended recruit training at Parris Island in 1957, when the heat of the trial was still felt. “The earth was still shaking when I was here.”

Alvarez was also a former

Marine, and both authors agreed their experiences gave them deeper insight on researching and writing.

“I was a lawyer, so I had the combination of legal training and being a Marine; it was only natural that I wrote the book,” said Stevens.

Alvarez, who was a drill instructor for two non-consecutive tours aboard Parris Island and a retired history professor, used the knowledge he obtained from his years in

the Corps and as a historian to contribute to his book.

“I had to get a research grant from Headquarters Marine Corps, and they felt a history professor and a retired drill instructor was a good combo to do a history of Parris Island,” said Alvarez.

Stevens, on the other hand, said he originally began doing research for his book to further his career.

“I was thinking of switching to an academic career, and [the book] was going to be my doctoral dissertation,” he said. “ But, that never happened. I was a judge at family court, and I never pursued the doctorate — but I continued to pursue the story.”

Though researching their books had its degree of difficulty, both agreed it was well worth the effort.

“The hardest part was getting started, and the second part was finding the sources,” said Stevens. “But, it was fascinating once I got started. I loved it.”

“The best part has been meeting the people I’ve met who’ve contacted me because of my book,” said Alvarez. “ I’ve met six former recruits since its publication ... I loved it all — the discipline to sit down and do it all. I enjoyed it all.”

Happy Birthday Marines!

Birthday Ball dates:

RTR Sgt. & Below Saturday, Nov. 1 Tickets: \$8 Cocktails: 6:30 p.m. Ceremony: 8:30 p.m. POC: Sgt. Blatcher, 228-3154	WFTBn. Sgt. & Below Friday, Nov. 7 Tickets: \$10 Cocktails: 7:30 p.m. Ceremony: 8:30 p.m. POC: Company office	H&SBn.Sgt. & Below Friday, Nov. 14 Tickets: \$14 Cocktails: 5:00 p.m. Ceremony: 6:30 p.m. POC: Company office	Depot Officer’s Ball Saturday, Nov. 8 Tickets: \$30 Cocktails: 6:30 p.m. Ceremony: 7:30 p.m. POC: Company office	Depot Staff NCO Ball Saturday, Nov. 15 Tickets: \$11 Cocktails:7:30 p.m. Ceremony: 8:30 p.m. POC:Company office
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Two photo packages will be offered: Package A will include: 1-8x10, 2-5x7 and 8 wallet for \$29
Package B will include: 2-5x7 and 8 wallets for \$23